

Political Participation Among Scheduled Castes: A Study on West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

India's democracy is the largest among countries in the world. The National Election Commission Report of India listed 900 million eligible voters, 468 million male and 432 million female. These Indian voters were spread over 29 states. A notable element of the 2019, 17th Lok Sabha Election was the participation of 15 million first-time voters aged 18–19. Only 14.39 percent of the 2019 Parliament was female, with 78 MPs. In comparison, 85.61 percent of the group was male (464). General Elections 2019, the National Election Planner, reports 3,66,61,315 Andhra Pradesh voters. According to NEP data, AP has 18,123,437 men, 18,474,714 women, and 3,745 others as voters. The Electrol Roll 2019 contains 56,908 service and 2,511 abroad Indian electors. Female voters grew by 3,51,277, or 1.93 percent. Andhra Pradesh has 539,804 18–19-year-old voters. Political engagement and understanding are essential to any political system. These tools make voters efficient and link them to politics. The International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences defines political involvement as the main way a democracy grants or revokes consent and holds power accountable to the people. It includes voting, acquiring information, discussing and persuading, attending meetings, donating, and communicating with representatives. Democracy and political participation are linked. Participation lets citizens express their interests. It fosters national stability and organization. It maximizes benefit for the most people. Different scholars define political participation differently depending on how they understand the different sorts of political activity. Growth generally requires participation. The UNDP's "Human Development Report 1993" lists four interconnected forms of involvement: family, economic, socio-cultural, and political.

Keywords: democracy; Parliament; engagement; political system; involvement; accountable; acquiring; persuading; representatives; participation; stability; involvement.

Meaning of Politics and Participation

To understand political engagement, one must define politics and participation. Politics dominates government councils and political science. The Cambridge dictionary defines politics as the acts and affairs of the government, legislators, and others who seek to affect a country's governance. From the elite to the masses, sensible and repudiating politics encourages involvement. Public involvement may be criticized for contradicting politics. M.L. Goel's study on 'Political Participation in India' includes political

discussions, voting, attending public meetings, demonstrating political interest, trying to influence political decisions, and donating to political parties.

Political participation is the active engagement in political activities, regardless of method, to influence decision-making directly or indirectly. Participation varies by time, circumstance, and person. These differences may be caused by internal and external influences. In "Political Participation: Theory, Methodology, and Measurement," Edward Kluienko examines political engagement and its role in changing society. In recent views, many scholars credit political engagement to this cultural development, Kluienko says, political participation is fundamental to democracy. Democracy relies on equal, efficient, and honest citizen participation. Politics is about gaining and using power to influence policy and decision-making and changing circumstances.

Political Participation

Political engagement is an essential component of any political system as it promotes stability and order by strengthening the legitimacy of political authority. Therefore, in contemporary political democracies, the concept of political involvement appears to be well developed. In contemporary society, every person regards political engagement as a civic obligation, a reflection of political well-being, and the most effective means of safeguarding one's interests (R.E. Dowse and John A. Huges, 1972). Political participation, as defined by some social scientists, encompasses the involvement of individuals in the political affairs of their community, granting them the chance to contribute to the determination of societal objectives. Participation encompasses the activities undertaken by regular members of a political system to exert influence or attempt to exert influence over results (Naga, Jack H. (1987). Political involvement encompasses the voluntary actions through which individuals in a community participate in the process of selecting rulers, either directly or indirectly. When it comes to shaping public policy, these actions encompass voting, gathering information, engaging in discussions and advocacy, attending meetings, making financial contributions, and interacting with legislators. More proactive forms of participation encompass official party membership, voter outreach and registration, speech composition and delivery, campaign involvement, and seeking public and party positions (McCloskey and Herbert, 1990).

People's Participation in Politics

Therefore, it is crucial to ensure the involvement of individuals in order to improve public trust and confidence in governing institutions, develop state policies that align with the demands of the people, and obtain valuable feedback regarding their reactions to these policies (Haque 2003). While the topic of people's participation has become more prominent in discussions on public administration and international development in recent decades, it is not a new concept. It has been present from the beginning of human civilization (Haque; 2003). Historically, the concepts of 'people's participation', 'decentralisation', 'progress', and 'democracy' have a strong interdependence and interconnectedness, and they share a common historical past. Upon initial observation, people's involvement may be a straightforward occurrence, however, in reality, it is not. In the past, the widely accepted idea of people's participation has been unclear in its definition and has lacked specific measurable accomplishments (Ahmed 1987). The core concept of participation is to empower local individuals by granting them substantial authority and decision-making capabilities in the development programs specifically tailored for them, which directly impact their lives. Blair (2000) has established a cause-and-effect relationship between participation, representation, empowerment, and benefits. According to Blair, participation leads

to representation, which in turn guarantees empowerment, ultimately resulting in advantages for everybody. Ultimately, these advancements effectively alleviate poverty and promote fairness across all demographics, ultimately leading the nation toward effective governance (Blair 2000:23).

The Concept of Political Participation

Different forms of political participation exist. Being politically active involves voting, sharing power, making decisions, and creating policies. Democracy's core values-liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice-can protect people from artificial disparities. Thus, democratic values are necessary to evaluate political activity and empowerment. The highest level of involvement and empowerment requires a democratic system. Empowerment is about working with others to change, not dominating. Empowerment requires political participation. Participation and empowerment are linked. Empowered people participate more in organisations which empowers them (S.R. Bakshi).

Citizens' political participation affects decision makers' attitude and actions, according to D. Palmer. Myron Weiner defines political activism as any voluntary action, organised or unorganised, that aims to influence public policy, the government, at the local or national level, using legitimate or illegitimate methods, and can be successful or unsuccessful, episodic or continuous. Note that not all citizens participate equally in political processes. Political culture influences political behaviour. Participation empowers citizens to express their disapproval and support for planned acts by turning them from passive observers to active participants. It lets people support and lead efforts, review, criticise, and delay, and promote, encourage, and expedite (Ferdinand Mount). To make political engagement meaningful, people must participate in daily decision-making. Political participation is multifaceted. Political engagement can be individual, collective, organised, spontaneous, persistent, occasional, peaceful, violent, legal, illegal, and effective or ineffective.

Historical Growth of Political Participation

Plato and Aristotle first mentioned political engagement. The Greek City governments and Athenian democratic governments provided suffrage and political office to all adult male citizens excluding foreigners and enslaved people. Aristotle believes that substantial citizen involvement is essential for character development in an ideal state (Edward Clayton). Douglas Wass (1984) also highlights citizens' participation in decision-making.

John Locke and Rousseau, political thinkers from the late 17th and early 18th centuries, believed the social contract theory supported popular sovereignty and individual rights. Marx, Engels, and Lenin categorised political participation by socioeconomic class. John Stuart Mill believes that responsible government works best when public participation is proportional to community progress. He also believes that only a population-based government can address society's requirements and that even the slightest engagement in public affairs is desirable. According to M.L. Goel and D.H. Smith (1980), political engagement includes any actions that influence the political system and its effects. Almond and Powell (1966) define political involvement as active participation in political decision-making. Norman and D. Palmer (1976) define political participation as citizen involvement in political activities that influence decision-makers.

Many Western philosophers have distinguished state from society, governance, and nation. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, an Indian political thinker, interpreted state, nation, and governance differently. He wanted to understand people and their socioeconomic status. He believed society is a fabrication based on human attitudes. He sees society as a dynamic exchange of customs, traditions, beliefs, and ideas amongst groups.

Lokhande (1977) defines "democracy" as significant social and economic changes that people accept without bloodshed. He claims that a culture that disrespects its women will decline in all areas.

Nature of Political Participation

Understanding the significance and dimensions of political involvement requires acknowledging that participation may vary depending on the level of government institutions. In a federal system, national, state, district, and village governments share power. Political participation is the involvement of individuals and groups in a political system at various levels, according to the International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences (Herbert McClosky). Political participation is any voluntary act to influence public policy, public affairs, and political leaders at all levels, according to Neera Desai and Thakar Usha. Lester Milbrath classifies political engagement hierarchically. Political engagement is divided into numerous categories, 8 determining its level. Lester Milbrath Politics argues that participation is an individual concern impacted by external political variables and engaging others. People react differently to stimuli and interactions according to their unique traits. Milbrath's notion of political participation includes both individual political activity and external stimuli's influence. Marcia defines a political participant as a member of an organised group that seeks to elect public officials or influence government policy.

Dimensions of Political Participation

Political engagement often encompasses three components. One factor to consider is the level or strength of an individual's political engagement. What level of energy, time, or financial resources does an individual desire to dedicate toward political engagement? This question requires a thorough evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of engaging in political activities to accomplish specific outcomes. Political participation necessitates the exercise of individual agency and the subsequent progression toward greater and more profound involvement.

The second level of political engagement encompasses voluntary and intentional forms of participation. Voting and expressing political opinions are the least and most prevalent forms of political participation that require the least and most effort, respectively. The third dimension refers to the level of activity that is selected. Frequently, individuals tend to see and act as if no political dynamics were occurring at levels below the national level. However, in the United States, the majority of problems are evaluated and addressed at the regional and state levels. Law enforcement, environmental protection, housing code enforcement, welfare benefits provision, and various other significant policies are established and implemented at these levels (Frank Kendrick).

Kinds of Political Participation

There is an extensive range of political engagement. There are multiple channels via which Americans can actively participate in politics. Verba et al. assert that voting, although a crucial method of citizen involvement in political matters, is merely one among multiple political actions. Political involvements comprise a wide range of activities related to political participation:

1. Vote.;
2. Engaging in and making valuable contributions to election campaigns and organisations.;
3. Establishing connections with government authorities.;
4. Collaborating with individuals to address communal issues.;
5. Participating in protests, marches, or demonstrations.;
6. Engaging in political activities by participating in volunteer societies.,
7. Volunteering on local elected and appointed boards without receiving any compensation.;
8. Donating funds to political causes in reaction to postal

requests.

Although the list is not organised in a hierarchical manner, it is evident that voting is the most straightforward method of engaging in political affairs. In addition, this list of activities is not merely theoretical; everything is Effectively put into practice.

Causes of Political Participation

Myron Weiner has identified seven factors that contribute to the increasing demand for participation in developing countries.

1. **Modernization:** The process of modernization has an impact on socialisation, which in turn influences political attitudes and behaviour. In general, the developmental process of developing countries demonstrates that education, industry, and urbanization have led to an increased need for political power.
2. **Relative deprivation** is a psychological factor that can explain why social protest, wealth growth, and better living conditions typically coincide with increased political participation.
3. **Social Stratification:** The modernization process has led to the emergence of new social groups that were not present before, resulting in a transformation of the relationships between existing social groups. The impact of social stratification is the aspiration of the middle classes to acquire a higher social standing. To do so, individuals engage in politics and strive to attain political power and authority.
4. **Social status reversal:** Primarily observed in emerging cultures, the emergence of new groups seeking improved social standing is attributed to their adoption of a modern perspective and access to greater education. This strategy has a detrimental impact on societies, as older factions are resorting to politics to reclaim their former status.
5. **The Intelligentsia:** The intelligentsia plays a more prominent role in both colonial and contemporary civilizations. They possess the ability to mobilise and incite the public against authoritarian regimes, encouraging their participation in nationalist activities.
6. **Intra-elite conflict** refers to a competitive political system where the governing elite and their opponents actively seek popular support, leading to an increase in mass political awareness. The presence of a non-competitive political system is the main factor contributing to the existence of a largely cohesive governing class.
7. The seventh factor that influences political involvement is the output of the government. This component focuses on the actions and policies of the citizen's government. The previous six criteria listed are considered pre-conditions that are influenced by environmental circumstances.

Political Participation and Traditional Theories

Verba and Nie have proposed a highly recognised and extensively utilised theory on political involvement that centres around resources. Alternatively referred to as:

The Socio-Economic Theory

More leisure time, financial resources, and civic engagement skills lead to more political activity, according to the theory. This approach has explained ethnic voting rate differences. It claims that ethnic minority groups have lesser political engagement due to their poorer socioeconomic condition and differences within the dominant group. The attitudinal or social psychology hypothesis posits that political

involvement is influenced by factors such as political efficacy, interest, trust, and civic obligation. This theory bears a resemblance to socioeconomic theory. According to social psychology experts, individuals with a higher socioeconomic status tend to possess political participation attitudes as a result of social expectations and conditions.

Nevertheless, resource-based theories possess some constraints. Declining voter participation in most democratic nations poses a challenge to the socio-economic theory, despite the increasing levels of wealth and education. These hypotheses have been criticized for primarily focusing on involvement related to "supply". Without a significant "demand" for participation, a challenging voter registration process, or a lack of effort from political parties to engage voters, even individuals with the means may lack the motivation to take part in the election process. Theories also take into account the concept of "demand" for this particular reason. A theory of civic literacy examines the individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities to participate in political discussions, as well as the institution's role in providing accessible and understandable political information for political engagement. According to civic literacy theorists, possessing political knowledge is crucial for both individual and community engagement in political activities.

The Demographic Theory

Refers to a scientific framework that analyses and explains the patterns and dynamics of human populations, focusing on factors such as birth rates, death rates, migration, and population growth. On the other hand, it is presumed that individuals who are younger, unmarried, and have fewer social connections have restricted opportunities to interact with and contribute to society as a whole. As a result, they are less likely to participate in political activities. The generational theory presents a current challenge to the demographic theory by arguing that an individual's political involvement is not solely determined by their age, but rather by the voting patterns they establish throughout their early years as a voter. Generational theorists argue that significant changes in voter turnout only occur during generational transitions. Moreover, these theories propose that older adults would display reduced levels of involvement if they had developed a habit of refraining from voting in their younger years.

The project will analyse the impact of "institutional variables" on the political engagement of SC Community Respondents by evaluating external factors that are beyond their control. Nevertheless, these ideas have faced significant criticism. The primary concerns revolve around the unpredictability of individuals altering their conduct in response to new individuals, as well as the inadequacy of specific groups in augmenting political engagement. The impact of "community variables" on social capital the political engagement of community members will be evaluated through the use of mobilisation theory, social capital theory, and other theories that examine the relationship between individuals and institutions.

Action, support, efficacy, intentionality, governmental formalism, and conventionality dominate political engagement discussions. The action question asks if engagement requires acts rather than perception, attitudes, or psychological orientations. The support question asks if engagement must be important or just ceremonial. The efficacy question is whether involvement occurs even if policy is not influenced. Regardless of whether the actor knew their behaviour was political, intentionality determines political engagement. Governmental formalism examines political involvement outside conventional government organisations. The conventionality argument asks if activities are participation only if they are legal, approved by power, or done inside the system (John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson). Laster Milbrath says

western political involvement is narrowly defined. It includes campaigning, debating politics, convincing others to vote, attending political events, distributing party literature, making financial contributions, and other activities. Lister Milbrath divides political engagement into three categories.

1. Gladiatorial-Direct party activities refer to engaging in various political activities within a party, such as running as a candidate, holding party positions, participating in party meetings, fundraising for the party, and actively participating in party campaigns.
2. Participating in party meetings in a transitional capacity involves being a supporter or an attentive listener, contributing to party funds, and establishing public contact with public leaders or party officials.
3. Spectatorial voting refers to the act of influencing people to vote in a specific manner. This can be done through engaging in political discussions, presenting oneself as a political catalyst, and displaying political symbols such as buttons or stickers.

These political participation classifications may appear hierarchical. A higher-ranking assignment needs more time, skill, and money from an individual. High-level workers do all subordinate jobs. Lower-ranking people can just observe. Their political interest and awareness are undisputed, but social and economic circumstances limit their political participation (Bhawna). Political engagement and attitude usually follow different paths. First, determine personality qualities associated to political activity or attitude level, quality, or intensity. In his book 'Political Participation', Lester Milbrath proposed a hierarchy of political activity. It may not include all citizen activities, but it provides a measure of traditional engagement. Casteism and communalism are important in Indian politics. Along with gender engagement, castes have shaped the Indian political system without seeking political affiliation. They are symbolically linked and participate in Hindu culture as a community.

The relationship is completely integrated and recognised when they mobilise politically. In the 1960s, social scientists observed that caste was one of several political influences. (ii) Caste was acquiring political power from village to constituency, state, and national levels. Politics used caste to express itself and modified it. They also stressed caste's integrative and democratic role. In the 1967 general elections, intermediate-caste politicians rose to power, transforming Indian politics. Caste politics were established in South India, notably Tamil Nadu. Khanna (1998) calls the 1977–1989 and 1990 elections a success for middle caste consolidation.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar said his thought is religious, not political. The caste system perpetuates inequality in India. He believed caste was the root of all India's issues and social disadvantages. Its roots are in Hinduism. Thus, Hinduism is inherently unequal. Inter-caste marriage and dining were prohibited by the caste system. As long as caste exists, unity is impossible. Focusing primarily on economic issues through legislation and policies would render our constitution useless, according to Ambedkar. Hinduism is rooted in caste, class, and sex inequality. Building a gorgeous palace on excrement is like that. Dr. Ambedkar wanted to create an equitable society where marginalised groups like scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities, and others have equal opportunity in social, economic, and political life, as well as other areas. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar believed that liberating people from traditional Hindu scriptures (Sastras) and eliminating their prejudiced beliefs based on them would naturally lead to people freely engaging in social interactions and marriages without external coercion. He encouraged inter-dining and inter-caste marriages, dividing India. The actions demean Dr. Ambedkar, the constitution-drafting committee chairman. The social and economic backwardness of scheduled castes and lower communities led to inadequate political representation. The committee aimed to create a society without caste or class distinctions with

constitutional protections. Political power is essential to solving all social and economic challenges. According to Dr. Ambedkar, no one is better equipped to address our complaints than ourselves. Formal education, economic advancement, and political representation were interdependent to reinforce each other and achieve the intended transformations and enhancements in dalit social standing. However, we need political power to tackle these difficulties. Due to political reservation at all levels, including rural Panchayats, scheduled castes have struggled to produce honest, dedicated leaders. Dr. Ambedkar believed that society must eliminate long-standing inequity between social classes and caste to progress. The current reservation system treats selected candidates as puppets controlled by the upper caste. Scheduled Castes were denied voting rights for a long time. Scheduled Castes in India have long-held socioeconomic privileges but no political rights.

Dr. Ambedkar fiercely opposed the British government to benefit the Scheduled Castes and other oppressed groups. Muhammad Ali Jinnah represented Muslims, Ambedkar represented Scheduled Castes, and Gandhi represented Hindus at the London 2nd Round Table Conference. Political representation of these groups in state and central legislatures was the key concern. The first Round Table Conference lacked Gandhi. Ambedkar's insightful speech on the protection of Scheduled Castes persuaded the British Government and conference attendees to grant them benefits, privileges, and special electoral rights through the Communal Award in 1932. The Sudras were India's lowest varna. In addition, they faced various social, economic, and political restrictions. Sudras include a variety of castes with long-standing social and economic imbalances. Staying outside the settlement was needed. They were considered untouchable because of pollution. The untouchable castes were formally designated as depressed castes in 1932 and included in India's 1931 census.

In the Indian Constitution, certain castes are designated Scheduled Castes. In order to save Mr. Gandhi, Dr. Ambedkar was forced to sign an agreement in Yerawade Jail, Poona, which is now called the Poona Pact in the current reservation system. However, the political seat reservation has not been implemented. Untouchables first voted in 1937. Dr. Ambedkar believed the Scheduled Castes would have no political power as long as the British ruled. The only way Scheduled Castes could gain political power was with a Swaraj constitution. They need political power to redeem themselves. Scheduled Castes are reminded that their struggle is a social one and not a political one. Dr. Ambedkar wrote the British a detailed note detailing the upper caste Hindus' abuse, insults, and hardships of the Scheduled Castes and the British's inaction. The memorandum mandated Scheduled Caste educational, employment, and political quotas. John Simon reported to the British government.

Modes of Political Participation

The idea of political involvement has been undergoing significant transformations. These developments will directly affect various forms of political engagement. Citizens can engage in various and unconventional methods to exert influence over the government and the political system. Until recently, the majority of survey studies on political engagement focused on a narrow range of political actions. The majority of inquiries focused on whether an individual had participated in voting, but some inquired about additional political activities such as attending political meetings or rallies, working for a political party, making financial contributions, or running for public office (Lester W. Milbrath, M.L. Goel).

According to Lester W. Milbrath and M.L. Goel, they believe that political acts can be organized in a hierarchy from least difficult to most difficult. They argue that if a person performs a more difficult act, they are likely to also conduct acts that are less difficult. When examining political involvement, it is

beneficial to view it in a hierarchical manner. However, it is important to acknowledge that some levels of participation may be lacking in certain political systems (Michael Rush and Philip Althoff). Not all political systems incorporate elections or any sort of voting. Some systems impose strong limitations or prohibit public gatherings and protests, while others disallow the establishment of political parties and other similar organisations (Michael Rush and Philip Althoff). Michael Rush and Phillip Althoff assert that the level of political participation can be explained by factors such as apathy, alienation, and the use of violence, which differ significantly across different political systems. These factors are crucial to consider when examining political participation. Schonfeld has identified ten distinct sorts of activities when analysing the ways of political participation.

1. Engaging in the pursuit of public or party offices,
2. Affiliating with a political party or other political organization,
3. Participating in election-related activities,
4. Attending political gatherings or rallies,
5. Providing financial support to a party or candidate,
6. Communicating with a public official,
7. Publicly advocating a political viewpoint to persuade others,
8. Engaging in political discourse,
9. Exercising the right to vote, and
10. Subjecting oneself to political influences.

William R. Schonfeld stated political engagement is the primary source or origin, while politics is the offspring or product. The former, referring to the creation and determination of politics, holds significant relevance for both the nation and the individual. The politics of the nation is thus influenced by the active involvement of individuals in all aspects of the political process (Raj Bala). Variables of Political Participation Political participation is a multifaceted phenomenon that is influenced by various factors, including psychological, socio-economic, and political aspects. These factors can either encourage or discourage individuals from engaging in political activities.

Factors Contributing to Political Participation

Political engagement is contingent upon various factors and exhibits variation across countries, time periods, and different segments of society. According to L.W. Milbrath (1977), participation varies based on four significant characteristics. The factors that influence an individual's political behaviour can be categorised into four main aspects: the level of exposure to political stimuli, the individual's social features, the individual's personal traits, and the political context in which the individual is situated. Generally, the level of political engagement is influenced by several social, psychological, economic, and political aspects. The social variables identified in several research encompass a range of characteristics, including age, gender, education, occupation, income, mobility, religion, race, group influence, urban-rural background, social involvement, length of residence in the community, and caste, among others.

One psychological characteristic of humans is their inclination towards sociability and their desire to comprehend their surroundings and political matters. He engages in politics because he is eager to extract significance from the political sphere. The aforementioned two variables are of more significance to the sociologist. The majority of the adult population in every society does not show interest or participate in politics and its connected activities. Instead, it is only a minority. As stated by L.W. Millbrath (1977),

individuals who have an interest in political activities are only able to engage in political conduct when their requirements may be consistently or gladly fulfilled. Every human being has inherent genetic requirements that encompass both substantive needs and instrumental needs. Substantive needs encompass various aspects such as physical safety, the need for social connection and love, the need for self-esteem and dignity, and the need for self-actualization, which involves discovering and pursuing activities that align with an individual's innate potential. These needs arise as individuals develop within a complex environment that provides a multitude of active choices. (Abraham Maslow, 1943) The second category of wants, known as instrumental needs, is similarly considered to be inherent. The three fundamental needs identified by M.C. Devis in 1986 are security, knowledge, and power.

Huntington and Nelson (1976) define political participation as encompassing various activities, including electoral engagement such as voting, campaigning, contributing to campaigns, working in elections, advocating for candidates, or any other action aimed at influencing electoral outcomes. Additionally, political participation includes lobbying and organisational efforts that explicitly seek to influence government decision-making processes.

Research Methodology:

Research can be characterized as an endless pursuit of truth. It unveils new insights, rectifies prior mistakes and misconceptions, and enriches the existing body of knowledge. Essentially, research represents the search for truth facilitated by various methods such as study, observation, comparison, and experimentation. In essence, the quest for new knowledge through objective and systematic approaches is what constitutes research. Engaging in the research process can be likened to embarking on a journey, one that involves following specific steps to answer the research questions effectively. Research methodology serves as the roadmap for this journey, providing a structured framework for systematically and scientifically addressing research problems. It encompasses all the stages a researcher undertakes in examining their research issue, along with the rationale that underpins those choices. Research methodology primarily focuses on the processes and procedures implemented to tackle research challenges, offering crucial guidance throughout the investigation.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To evaluate the level of political participation among Scheduled castes in West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh.
2. To identify the types of political engagement in which the Scheduled castes participants partake.
3. To analyse the perspectives of the participants regarding political involvement.
4. To measure the degree of political interest among the Scheduled castes participants.
5. To elicit information on socio-economic background of the Scheduled castes in West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh.
6. To find out the role of caste and mass-media in creating political awareness among Scheduled castes and their influence on political participation.
7. To elicit information on the role of public meetings and pressure groups in the political participation of Scheduled castes.
8. To find out the nature and extent of political participation of the Scheduled castes in West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh.

Hypotheses:

Based on a comprehensive literature review, discussions regarding abstract agendas and collaborations have been enhanced. This study has been carefully crafted for exploration and validation in a specific area. The hypotheses are listed below in alignment with the sequence of independent variables outlined in the "conceptual framework" discussion. To delve into the depth of the issues, several key hypotheses were developed and examined, which are as follows:

H1: This hypothesis states that there is uniform opinion among respondents about the impact of mass media on Scheduled castes political participation.

H2: This hypothesis suggests that respondents are actively participating and supporting caste-based political parties.

H3: This hypothesis proposes that the majority of respondents do not support national political parties and lack interest in creating political participation among Scheduled castes.

H4: This hypothesis states that most respondents are active political members of pressure groups and participate in politics because of caste groups.

H5: This hypothesis suggests that most respondents are not actively participating due to occupational, religious, or trade union affiliations.

H6: Educational qualifications do not impact the level of political awareness.

H7: Age is not linked to political participation.

H8: Marital status does not affect political participation

H9: Family responsibilities do not hinder political participation.

These hypotheses can be tested through various methods, such as surveys, interviews, or focus groups, to understand the relationship between mass media and Scheduled castes political participation in West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh.

Research Design:

The research design employed in this study is both descriptive and explanatory in its approach. Descriptive studies aim to provide accurate descriptions of the characteristics of a specific group or community. In this research, the focus is on detailing the demographic profile of scheduled castes respondents in West Godavari District, encompassing factors such as educational background, occupation, marital status, religion, caste, community, nativity, family members' educational history, siblings, family structure, and monthly income. Additionally, the study delves into the political inclinations of the respondents and their family members, including involvement in politics. Detailed inquiries were also made regarding the respondents' exposure to mass media and social media. The descriptive research design primarily focuses on delineating the profile of the respondents, shedding light on their family background and accomplishments. This examination provides insights into the level of political empowerment and exposure among the participants.

Selection of District

The study specifically an empirical chose West Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh due to its greatest concentration of scheduled castes voters. Among the 32 districts in the state of Andhra Pradesh, West Godavari has the largest population of scheduled castes.

Sampling Procedure

Goode and Hatt define a sample as a smaller representative of a bigger whole. P.V. Young defines a statistical sample as a scaled-down representation or snapshot of the complete group or collection from which the sample is derived. The complete set of individuals or items from which a sample is selected is referred to as the 'Population' or 'Universe'. The sample was selected using a Purposive sampling approach. A total of 360 males and 360 females were selected as the target sample from each both chosen for the study. The samples obtained from these regions are combined, and ultimately a dataset consisting of 720 respondents from scheduled castes was utilized for analysis.

WEST GODAVARI (SC) MANDALS

Selected Villages of SCs Constituencies – 2011 (Census)

GOPALAPURAM:							
					Sample Population		
S. No	Name of the Village	No. of Households	Total Population	SC Population	Male	Female	Total
1	Gopalapuram	2965	11573	4983	30	30	60
2	Gangolu	2909	10163	3850	30	30	60
3	Vella Chintalagudem	1496	4952	2546	30	30	60
4	Vadalakunta	1191	4149	1948	30	30	60
				Total	120	120	240

KOVVUR:							
					Sample Population		
S. No	Name of the Village	No. of Households	Total Population	SC Population	Male	Female	Total
1	Dommeru	3646	13000	3625	30	30	60
2	Vadapalle	2032	7472	1747	30	30	60
3	Madduru	1783	6583	732	30	30	60
4	Is. Pangidi	1799	6855	1209	30	30	60
				Total	120	120	240

CHINTALAPUDI:							
					Sample Population		
S. No	Name of the Village	No. of Households	Total Population	SC Population	Male	Female	Total
1	Chintalapudi	6811	25952	8475	30	30	60
2	Pragadavaram	3011	10755	5326	30	30	60
3	Erraguntapalle	1768	6606	1855	30	30	60
4	Ragavapuram	1655	5792	1481	30	30	60
				Total	120	120	240

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

The completeness of the data in the interview schedule was verified. Subsequently, the gathered data underwent coding and entry into a computer system. Analysis of the data was conducted utilizing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). To ensure data integrity, thorough editing, coding, and verification processes were carried out. The analysis was structured around the study's objectives and hypotheses, combining descriptive and explanatory elements. Descriptive statistics were employed to outline demographic details and basic data features. Data presentation included simple frequency tables and essential descriptive statistics such as mean, median, and standard deviation when required. Additionally, preliminary analysis utilized straightforward graphical and diagrammatic representations. The primary focus of the research was to identify independent variables affecting political participation, including age, educational background, marital status, occupation, and income. Common reasons for women's lack of involvement in politics often stem from factors such as illiteracy, limited access to economic resources, lack of awareness about public affairs, and notably, family responsibilities and commitments.

Tools Used In The Study:

The researcher implemented a systematic approach to collect the necessary data to fulfil the established objectives. In this study, the primary tool employed was a structured interview schedule that gathered information about the socio-economic status and demographic profiles of 720 Scheduled castes political participation in West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh. The structured interview schedule was crafted specifically for this research. Great care was taken during its development to ensure that all relevant items were included to effectively capture the influencing factors or conditions.

Primary Data:

Primary data is obtained directly by the researcher through tools like interview schedules, which requires more effort, time, and resources. It is specifically gathered for the investigation at hand, setting it apart from secondary data. The primary data collection involved various field techniques and direct interaction with respondents through interviews. Interview schedules and observation methods were utilized for gathering primary data.

Secondary Data:

On the other hand, secondary data is sourced from a diverse range of materials such as books, publications, journals, magazines, seminar papers, and websites. This also includes relevant articles in newspapers. Secondary data was compiled from e-books, national reports, and through visits to libraries and bookstores in institutions to ensure the authenticity of the secondary data collected.

Review of Literature:

Verma (2001) stated that most studies examining electoral participation in India have extensively discussed the influence of religion, caste, linguistic ties, and community affiliations as the primary factors that shape an individual's voting behaviour. Certain loyalties are crucial in any society, and engaging in a political process involves multiple degrees of participation. Political engagement encompasses various aspects such as political awareness, the inclination to develop and maintain opinions on public matters, engaging in campaigns, voting, running for political positions, and actively participating in decision-

making processes.

Gawati. S. Satish (2000) conducted a study on "The influence of economic development on political participation." After conducting extensive research, the researcher has uncovered a unique insight into the influence of economic development on political participation from several interpretive angles, which has not been widely recognized until now.

Kumar, Arvind (1998) conducted a study on the impact of mass media in political communication. The researcher explained that knowledge is possible only through communication and every individual is an upright citizen must contribute to the task of nation-building. The study includes the full possession of facts about the government, leaders, political body, economic policy of the nation, foreign policy etc. also pointed out that the role played by mass media is important in the sense that it reaches the masses in a conveniently short time.

Guo, Zhongshi (1996), elucidated that the dissertation undertakes to analyse two main tasks expounding the concepts of media use, Political erudition political participation and examining the differential effects of newspaper and television. The media effects models are specified, each testing a particular aspect of the differential impact of newspaper and television news. Concentrating on the cognitive components of political erudition and reconceptualizing the highly disputed erudition construct also it empirically tests the distinctiveness dimensions.

Kulynych, Jessica Jan (1996) The dissertation examines the intersection of post-modern political theory with the analysis of political engagement. Conventional methods of examining engagement possess contemporary, liberal interpretations of authority and the subjective nature of knowledge, which are unsuitable for a postmodern society. A researcher questions the importance of conventional interpretations of participation in the complicated, technological, bureaucratic, and disciplinary structure of modern societies, as defined by Jurgen Habermas and Michel.

Akinchan (1995) concluded in his book Caste, Class and Politics that in traditional society, political participation at the national level is inadequate to the members of the upper class, and consequently, the units of partaking are chiefly intra-class cliques accompanied in some measure by patron-client groupings. The structuring of politics on communal lines tends to produce complex levels of political participation.

Conway, M. Margaret (1995), examined on recent survey data collected in southern California as it analyses the connotations of being an Asian in political participation at three levels that is across pan-ethnic groups, inside the multi-ethnic Asian group, and within a specific Asian nationality group. The outcomes approve previous conclusions that, related to other major ethnic groups and Asian ethnicity is indicated by objective cultural background dampens participation. Despite controls over several sets of features frequently related to the political participation of conventional and minority groups.

Kathleen Dolan (1995) elucidated the elongated recognition by socialization researchers with the reputation of the family and the changing nature of the family in modern life. The researcher seeks to test the hypothesis that children of two parents' families endure dissimilar political socializations than those of single-parent families also analysed that family structure is not related to the levels of political effectiveness, information, or any of the participation variables. Also concluded that the only affiliation between family structure and arrogances is a rather weak one with political trust. "Both men and women, together and alone, can contribute to the effective socialization of their progenies."

Bhaskaramma K. (1990) explained that the Scheduled Caste community recognizes the increased participation of women in politics. The researcher examined the extent to which the plaintiffs were cognizant of the collective impact of women in politics. Political participation by Scheduled Castes women

through elections, voting, and activism occurs regularly but appears to have no impact on their lifestyles. **Abbasayulu, Y. B.** (1978), conducted a sociological study on scheduled caste legislators of Andhra Pradesh and concluded that most of the legislators belonged to a younger age group. Factors like educational background, property, and caste background of Harijans played an imperative role in serving to become leaders in the accumulation to the reservation. The scheduled caste legislators have documented that their people have problems like untouchability, lack of housing, education on, drinking water facilities, drainage facilities, etc., the study revealed that they can exercise some power in helping the low caste people by their effective political participation to implement the upliftment policies.

Verma (1973) The study focused on most urban residents who did not participate in political gatherings. Similarly, most responders were not engaged in campaigning for candidates. Only a majority of people attended political meetings or campaigned for candidates, and urban residents showed a noticeable level of participation. However, when it came to activities like attending election meetings, campaigning for candidates, and joining political parties, and other organizations, a vast majority of them did not actively participate. Dalits exhibit a significantly higher level of participation in terms of their voting intentions compared to other caste groupings.

ANALYSIS ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AMONG SCHEDULED CASTES IN WEST GODAVARI DISTRICT STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

Table 1: Overall Perceptions of Respondents Towards Political Participation Among Scheduled Castes in West Godavari District

Area	Min. Score	Max. Score	Mean	Mean Percent	Std. Dev.
Political Participation of Respondents	14	56	25.62	45.75	8.72
Discussion on Politics	8	32	17.07	53.36	5.40
Get Political Information	8	32	15.56	48.62	4.79
Factors related to Political Participation	17	85	52.41	61.66	12.24

Table 1. shows that the, respondents expressed average and below average perceptions with respect to the areas viz Political Participation, Discussion on Politics, Get Political Information and Factors related to Political Participation. The mean values for all the areas were 25.62, 17.07, 15.56, and 52.41 and the mean percentages for all the areas were 45.75%, 53.36%, 48.62% and 61.66% on their total score.

Figure – 48 : Overall Perceptions of Respondents Towards Political Participation Among Scheduled Castes in West Godavari District

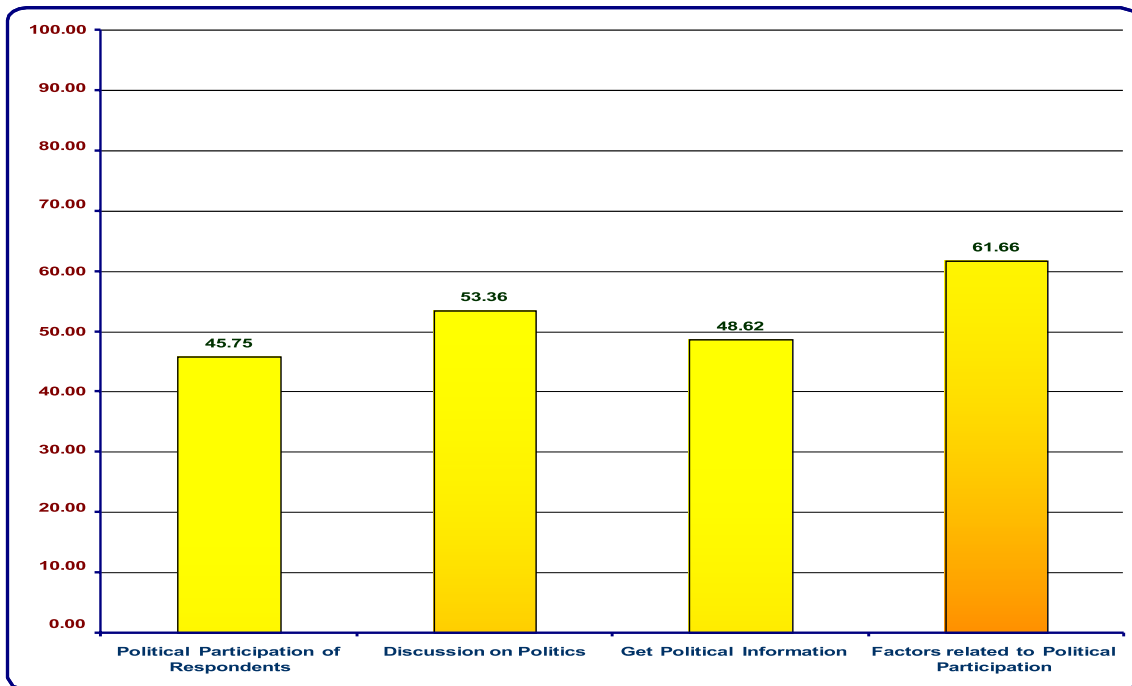


Table 2, observed that the mean perceptual scores of respondents based on their constituency with respect to Political Participation of Respondents, the mean perceptual scores of Gopalapuram Constituency respondents was 26.64, whereas it is for Kovvuru was 25.36 and it was for Chintalapudi was 24.86 and SD values are 11.31, 7.71 and 6.31 respectively. The ‘F’-value was 3.07 and the p-value was 0.04, which was significant at 0.05 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their constituency and Gopalapuram Constituency respondents perceived high towards Political Participation of Respondents than that of the rest.

With respect to Gender, the mean perceptual scores of male category respondents were 28.58, whereas it is for female category respondents was 22.66 and SD values are 9.71 and 6.37 respectively. The ‘t’-value was 9.66 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of male and female category respondents and male category respondents perceived high towards Political Participation of Respondents than that of the female category respondents.

With respect to Age, the mean perceptual scores of below 25 years age group respondents was 20.31, whereas it is for 25-30 years age group respondents was 24.61, it was for 30-35 years age group was 25.83, it was for 35-40 years age group was 25.63, it was for 40-45 years age group was 27.05, it was for 45-50 years age group was 25.29, it was for 50-55 years age group was 26.12, it was for 55-60 years age group was 25.96, it was for 60-65 years age group was 27.14, it was for above 65 years age group was 25.50 and SD values are 4.96, 7.83, 8.00, 8.80, 10.00, 10.03, 7.93, 10.71, 8.18 and 9.72 respectively. The ‘F’-value was 1.65 and the p-value was 0.10, which was not significant. This shows that, there is no significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their age group and they perceived similar opinion towards Political Participation of Respondents.

With respect to Caste, the mean perceptual scores of Mala category respondents were 25.42, whereas it is for Madiga category respondents was 25.82 and SD values are 9.09 and 8.34 respectively. The ‘t’-value was 0.63 and the p-value was 0.53, which was not significant. This shows that, there is no significant

difference between the perceptions of Mala and Madiga category respondents and they perceived similar opinion towards Political Participation of Respondents.

With respect to Religion, the mean perceptual scores of Hindu religion category respondents were 25.69, whereas it is for Christian category respondents was 25.60 and SD values are 8.15 and 8.87 respectively. The 't'-value was 0.10 and the p-value was 0.92, which was not significant. This shows that, there is no significant difference between the perceptions of Hindu and Christian religion category respondents and they perceived similar opinion towards Political Participation of Respondents.

With respect to Marital Status, the mean perceptual scores of Unmarried category respondents were 23.81, whereas it is for Married category respondents was 25.81 and SD values are 7.92 and 8.79 respectively. The 't'-value was 2.80 and the p-value was 0.05, which was significant at 0.05 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of Unmarried and Married category respondents and married category respondents perceived high towards Political Participation of Respondents than that of the rest.

With respect to Type of family, the mean perceptual scores of Joint family category respondents were 26.33, whereas it is for nuclear category respondents was 24.72 and SD values are 8.58 and 8.83 respectively. The 't'-value was 2.47 and the p-value was 0.01, which was significant at 0.05 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of Joint and Nuclear family category respondents and Joint family category respondents perceived high towards Political Participation of Respondents than that of the rest.

With respect to Educational Qualification, the mean perceptual scores of Illiterates was 24.45, whereas it is for Primary education was 25.04, it was for Secondary Education was 25.23, it was for Under Graduates was 26.13, it was for Graduates was 28.61, and it was for Post Graduate was 24.98 and SD values are 6.98, 7.73, 8.95, 9.26, 11.24 and 7.16 respectively. The 'F'-value was 3.38 and the p-value was 0.01, which was significant at 0.05 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their educational qualifications and Graduation qualified category respondents perceived high towards Political Participation of Respondents than that of the rest.

With respect to Occupation, the mean perceptual scores of Unemployed was 25.13, whereas it is for Employed was 26.69, it was for Labour was 25.26, it was for Farmer was 31.17, it was for Business was 27.52, and it was for home maker was 22.31 and SD values are 7.46, 9.92, 8.32, 10.51, 8.31 and 6.37 respectively. The 'F'-value was 13.05 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their occupation and Farmer occupation category respondents perceived high towards Political Participation of Respondents than that of the rest.

With respect to Monthly Income, the mean perceptual scores of respondents whose monthly income was Rs.1000-5000 was 22.42, whereas it is for Rs. 5000-10000 was 26.45, it was for Rs. 10000-15000 was 29.26, it was for Rs. 15000-20000 was 29.88, it was for Rs. 20000 - 25000 was 28.89, and it was for Above Rs. 25000 was 23.21 and SD values are 6.64, 8.43, 9.17, 12.83, 12.65 and 7.21 respectively. The 't'-value was 14.04 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their monthly income and Rs. 15000 to 20000 monthly income category respondents perceived high towards Political Participation of Respondents than that of the rest.

Figure – : Mean Comparison Among The Perceptions of Respondents Based on Their Demographic Variables I.E., Constituency, Gender And Age Group Towards Political Participation of Respondents

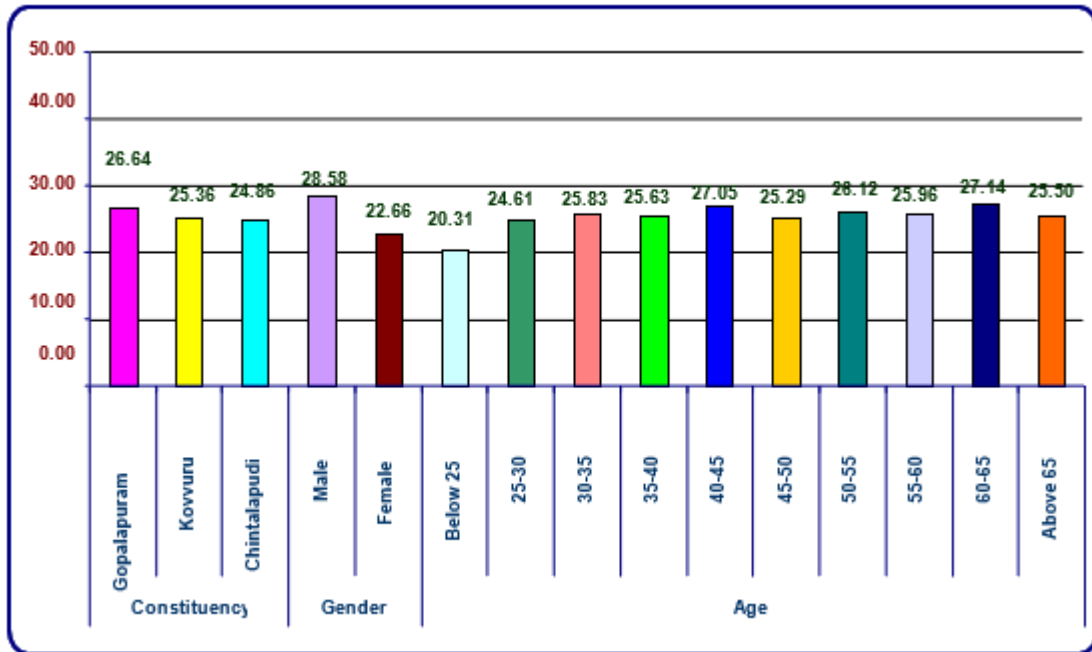


Figure – : Mean Comparison Among The Perceptions Of Respondents Based On Their Demographic Variables I.E., Caste, Religion, Marital Status, Type Of Family And Educational Qualification Towards Political Participation of Respondents

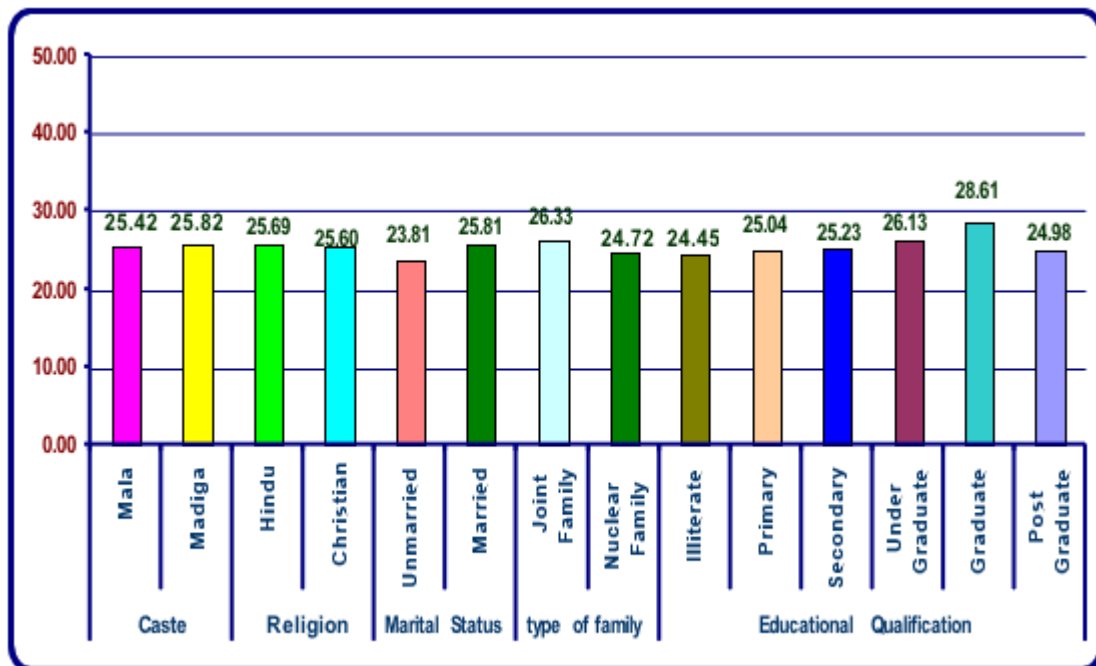


Figure – : Mean Comparison Among The Perceptions Of Respondents Based On Their Demographic Variables I.E., Occupation And Monthly Income Towards Political Participation of Respondents

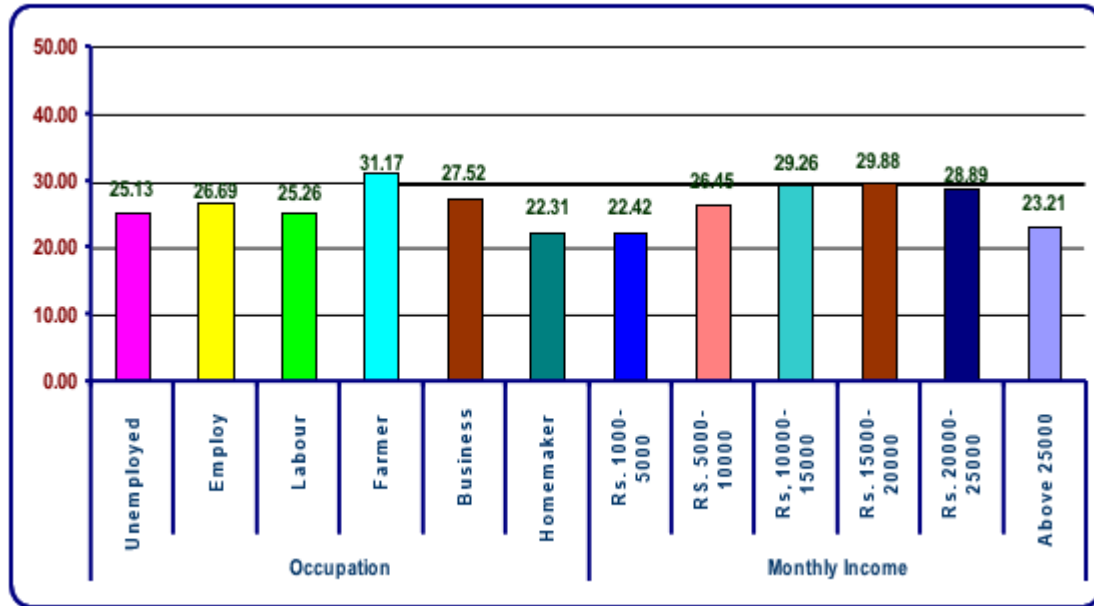


Table 3, observed that the mean perceptual scores of respondents based on their constituency with respect to Respondents Discussion on Politics, the mean perceptual scores of Gopalapuram Constituency respondents was 14.90, whereas it is for Kovvuru was 17.90 and it was for Chintalapudi was 18.42 and SD values are 6.33, 5.10 and 3.79 respectively. The ‘F’-value was 32.30 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their constituency and Chintalapudi Constituency respondents perceived high towards Respondents Discussion on Politics than that of the rest.

With respect to Gender, the mean perceptual scores of male category respondents were 18.58, whereas it is for female category respondents was 15.57 and SD values are 5.37 and 4.99 respectively. The ‘t’-value was 7.79 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of male and female category respondents and male category respondents perceived high towards Respondents Discussion on Politics than that of the female category respondents.

With respect to Age, the mean perceptual scores of below 25 years age group respondents was 12.77, whereas it is for 25-30 years age group respondents was 16.17, it was for 30-35 years age group was 17.63, it was for 35-40 years age group was 17.11, it was for 40-45 years age group was 16.96, it was for 45-50 years age group was 16.54, it was for 50-55 years age group was 17.78, it was for 55-60 years age group was 19.55, it was for 60-65 years age group was 16.59, it was for above 65 years age group was 15.75 and SD values are 4.06, 5.10, 4.76, 5.50, 5.34, 5.78, 5.25, 5.73, 6.32 and 7.96 respectively. The ‘F’-value was 3.91 and the p-value was 0.04, which was significant at 0.00 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their age group and 55-60 years age group respondents perceived high towards Respondents Discussion on Politics than that of the rest.

With respect to Caste, the mean perceptual scores of Mala category respondents were 16.74, whereas it is for Madiga category respondents was 17.41 and SD values are 5.27 and 5.51 respectively. The ‘t’-value was 1.66 and the p-value was 0.10, which was not significant. This shows that, there is no significant

difference between the perceptions of Mala and Madiga category respondents and they perceived similar opinion towards Respondents Discussion on Politics.

With respect to Religion, the mean perceptual scores of Hindu religion category respondents were 17.96, whereas it is for Christian category respondents was 16.85 and SD values are 5.15 and 5.44 respectively. The 't'-value was 2.20 and the p-value was 0.03, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of Hindu and Christian religion category respondents and Hindu religion category respondents perceived high towards Respondents Discussion on Politics than that of the rest.

With respect to Marital Status, the mean perceptual scores of Unmarried category respondents were 16.25, whereas it is for Married category respondents was 17.16 and SD values are 5.28 and 5.41 respectively. The 't'-value was 1.32 and the p-value was 0.19, which was not significant. This shows that, there is no significant difference between the perceptions of Unmarried and Married category respondents and they perceived similar opinion towards Respondents Discussion on Politics.

With respect to Type of family, the mean perceptual scores of Joint family category respondents were 18.17, whereas it is for nuclear category respondents was 15.69 and SD values are 4.58 and 6.00 respectively. The 't'-value was 6.28 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of Joint and Nuclear family category respondents and Joint family category respondents perceived high towards Respondents Discussion on Politics than that of the rest.

With respect to Educational Qualification, the mean perceptual scores of Illiterates was 16.13, whereas it is for Primary education was 16.97, it was for Secondary Education was 16.39, it was for Under Graduates was 17.14, it was for Graduates was 18.90, and it was for Post Graduate was 18.46 and SD values are 4.70, 5.16, 5.45, 5.94, 5.68 and 5.22 respectively. The 'F'-value was 4.78 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their educational qualifications and Graduate category respondents perceived high towards Respondents Discussion on Politics than that of the rest.

With respect to Occupation, the mean perceptual scores of Unemployed was 18.00, whereas it is for Employ was 19.72, it was for Labour was 16.55, it was for Farmer was 19.00, it was for Business was 19.03, and it was for Home maker was 15.16 and SD values are 5.68, 5.16, 5.38, 5.31, 5.15 and 4.69 respectively. The 'F'-value was 12.55 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their occupation and Employ category respondents perceived high towards Respondents Discussion on Politics than that of the rest.

With respect to Monthly Income, the mean perceptual scores of respondents whose monthly income was Rs.1000-5000 was 15.17, whereas it is for Rs. 5000-10000 was 17.37, it was for Rs. 10000-15000 was 18.87, it was for Rs. 15000-20000 was 18.79, it was for Rs. 20000 - 25000 was 21.11, and it was for Above Rs. 25000 was 20.16 and SD values are 5.02, 4.97, 5.65, 5.94, 4.92 and 6.69 respectively. The 'F'-value was 13.35 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their monthly income and Rs. 20000 - 25000 monthly income category respondents perceived high towards Respondents Discussion on Politics than that of the rest.

Figure – : Mean Comparison Among the Perceptions of Respondents Based on Their Demographic Variables I.E., Constituency, Gender And AgeGroup Towards Respondents Discussion on Politic

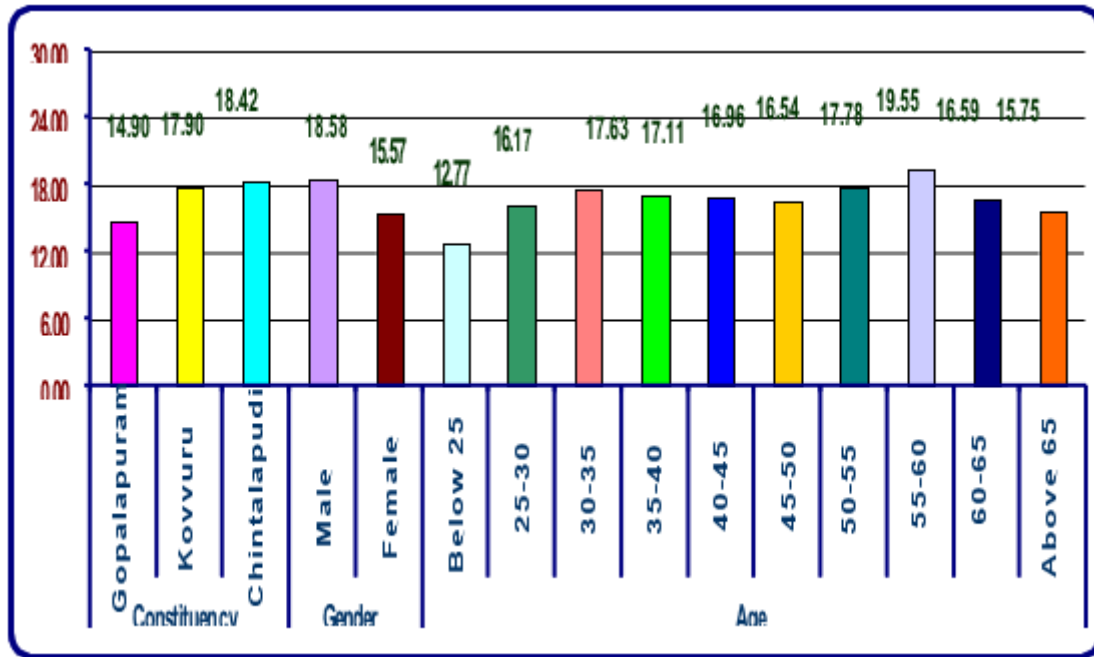


Figure – : Mean Comparison Among the Perceptions of Respondents Based on Their Demographic Variables I.E., Caste, Religion, Marital Status, Type of Family And Educational Qualification Towards Respondents Discussion on Politics

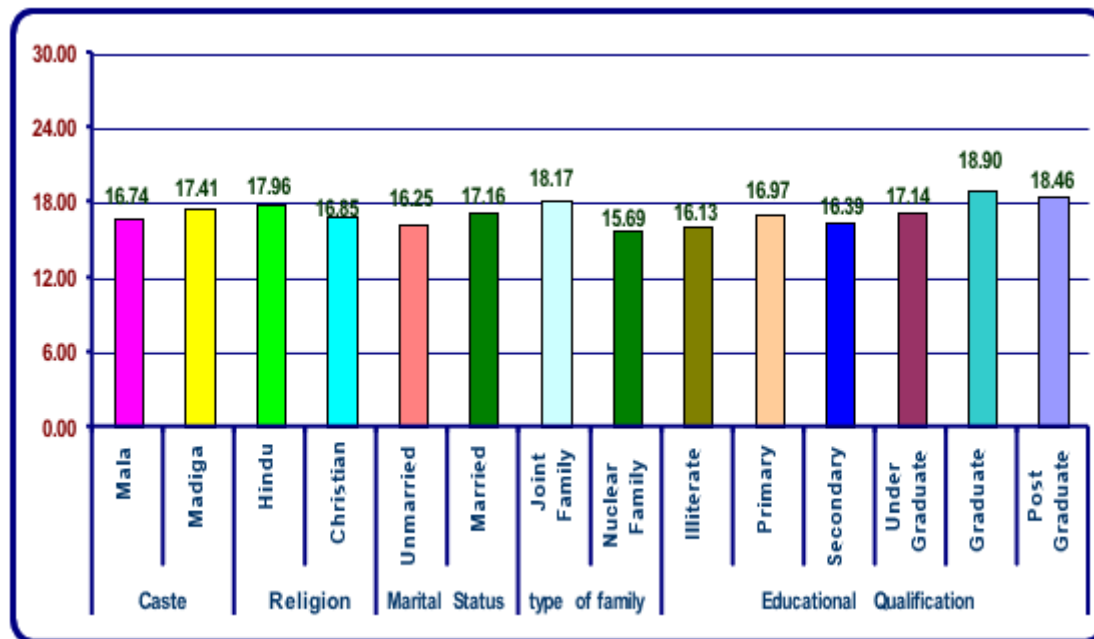


Figure – : Mean Comparison Among the Perceptions of Respondents Based on Their Demographic Variables I.E., Occupation And Monthly Income Towards Respondents Discussion on Politics

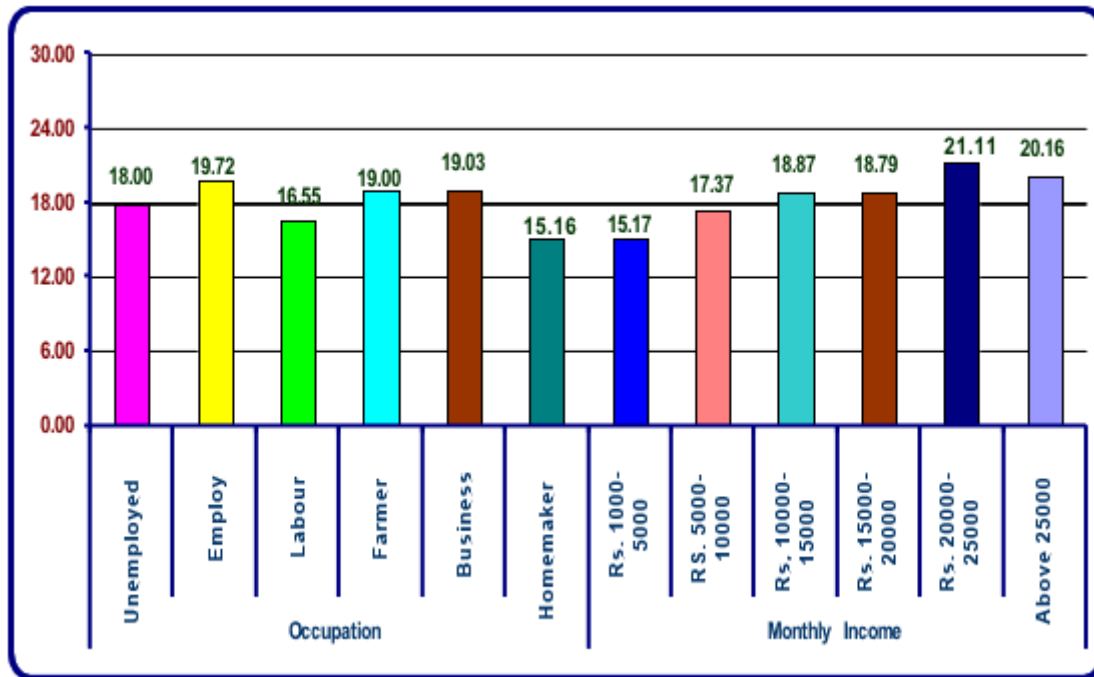


Table 4, observed that the mean perceptual scores of respondents based on their constituency with respect to Respondents get Information, the mean perceptual scores of Gopalapuram Constituency respondents was 14.99, whereas it is for Kovvuru was 16.03 and it was for Chintalapudi was 15.66 and SD values are 6.15, 4.62 and 3.03 respectively. The ‘F’-value was 2.89 and the p-value was 0.05, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their constituency and Kovvuru Constituency respondents perceived high towards Respondents get Information than that of the rest.

With respect to Gender, the mean perceptual scores of male category respondents were 16.85, whereas it is for female category respondents was 14.27 and SD values are 4.77 and 4.46 respectively. The ‘t’-value was 7.49 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of male and female category respondents and male category respondents perceived high towards Respondents get Information than that of the female category respondents.

With respect to Age, the mean perceptual scores of below 25 years age group respondents was 12.35, whereas it is for 25-30 years age group respondents was 15.88, it was for 30-35 years age group was 16.03, it was for 35-40 years age group was 15.56, it was for 40-45 years age group was 15.82, it was for 45-50 years age group was 14.97, it was for 50-55 years age group was 15.52, it was for 55-60 years age group was 15.91, it was for 60-65 years age group was 14.72, it was for above 65 years age group was 16.38 and SD values are 3.19, 4.75, 4.51, 4.74, 5.23, 5.62, 4.06, 4.82, 4.62 and 8.37 respectively. The ‘F’-value was 2.82 and the p-value was 0.05, which was significant at 0.05 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their age group and 30-35 years age group respondents perceived high towards Respondents get Information than that of the rest.

With respect to Caste, the mean perceptual scores of Mala category respondents were 15.67, whereas it is for Madiga category respondents was 15.45 and SD values are 4.93 and 4.65 respectively. The ‘t’-value

was 0.62 and the p- value was 0.53, which was not significant. This shows that, there is no significant difference between the perceptions of Mala and Madiga category respondents and they perceived similar opinion towards Respondents get Information.

With respect to Religion, the mean perceptual scores of Hindu religion category respondents were 15.52, whereas it is for Christian category respondents was 15.57 and SD values are 4.20 and 4.93 respectively. The 't'-value was 0.11 and the p-value was 0.91, which was not significant. This shows that, there is no significant difference between the perceptions of Hindu and Christian religion category respondents and they perceived similar opinion towards Respondents get Information.

With respect to Marital Status, the mean perceptual scores of Unmarried category respondents were 14.22, whereas it is for Married category respondents was 15.70 and SD values are 4.00 and 4.84 respectively. The 't'-value was 2.43 and the p-value was 0.02, which was significant at 0.05 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of Unmarried and Married category respondents and married category respondents perceived high towards Respondents get Information than that of the rest.

With respect to Type of family, the mean perceptual scores of Joint family category respondents were 16.19, whereas it is for nuclear category respondents was 14.76 and SD values are 4.05 and 5.48 respectively. The 't'-value was 4.01 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of Joint and Nuclear family category respondents and Joint family category respondents perceived high towards Respondents get Information than that of the rest.

With respect to Educational Qualification, the mean perceptual scores of Illiterates was 13.95, whereas it is for Primary education was 14.11, it was for Secondary Education was 14.45, it was for Under Graduates was 15.94, it was for Graduates was 19.14, and it was for Post Graduate was 19.54 and SD values are 3.62, 3.90, 4.58, 4.93, 4.75 and 4.24 respectively. The 'F'-value was 33.91 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their educational qualifications and Post Graduate category respondents perceived high towards Respondents get Information than that of the rest.

With respect to Occupation, the mean perceptual scores of Unemployed was 16.27, whereas it is for Employ was 19.10, it was for Labour was 14.86, it was for Farmer was 17.11, it was for Business was 16.45, and it was for home maker was 14.29 and SD values are 4.56, 4.41, 4.69, 4.84, 4.31 and 4.36 respectively. The 'F'-value was 14.54 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their occupation and Employ category respondents perceived high towards Respondents get Information than that of the rest.

With respect to Monthly Income, the mean perceptual scores of respondents whose monthly income was Rs.1000-5000 was 13.78, whereas it is for Rs. 5000-10000 was 15.27, it was for Rs. 10000-15000 was 17.72, it was for Rs. 15000-20000 was 18.32, it was for Rs. 20000 - 25000 was 20.94, and it was for Above Rs. 25000 was 21.65 and SD values are 4.44, 4.17, 4.82, 4.88, 3.98 and 4.28 respectively. The 'F'-value was 28.51 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their monthly income and Above Rs. 25000 monthly income category respondents perceived high towards Respondents get Information than that of the rest.

Figure – : Mean Comparison Among the Perceptions Of Respondents Based On Their Demographic Variables I.E., Constituency, Gender And AgeGroup Towards Respondents Get Political Information

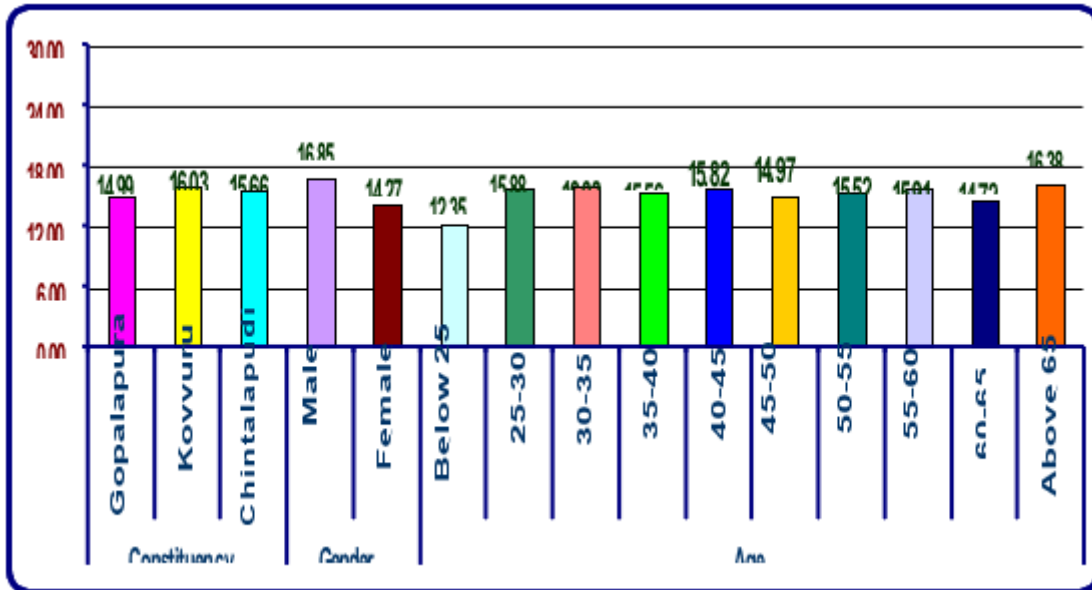


Figure – : Mean Comparison Among the Perceptions Of Respondents Based On Their Demographic Variables I.E., Caste, Religion, Marital Status, Type Of Family And Educational Qualification Towards Respondents Get Political Information

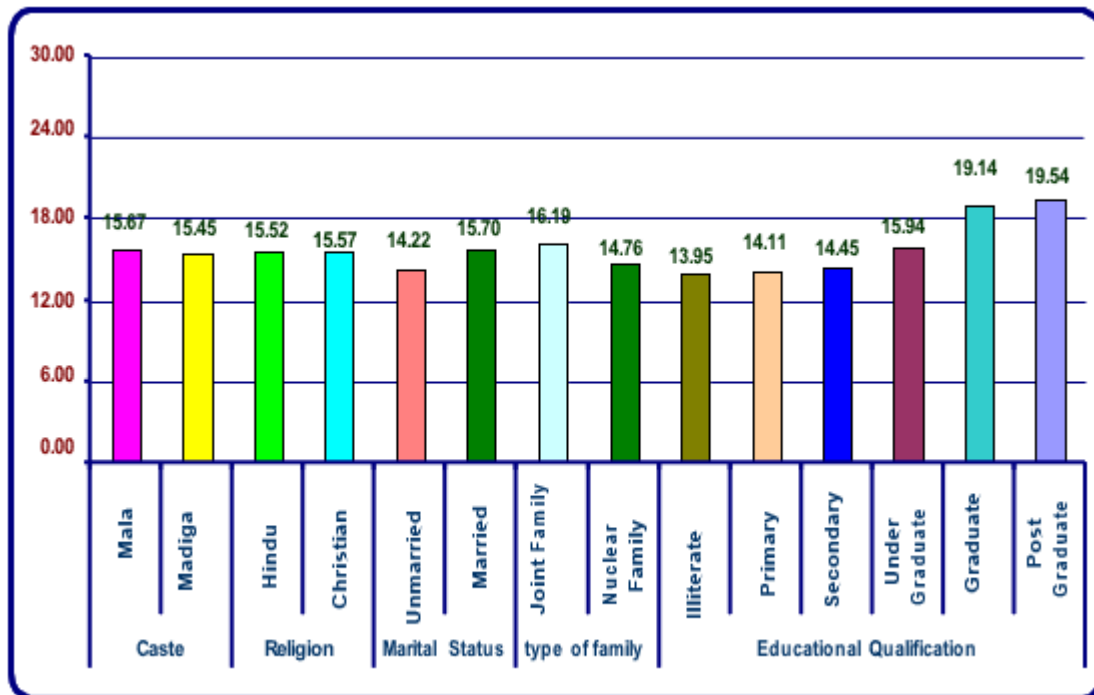


Figure – : Mean Comparison Among the Perceptions Of Respondents Based On Their Demographic Variables I.E., Occupation And Monthly Income Towards Respondents Get Political Information

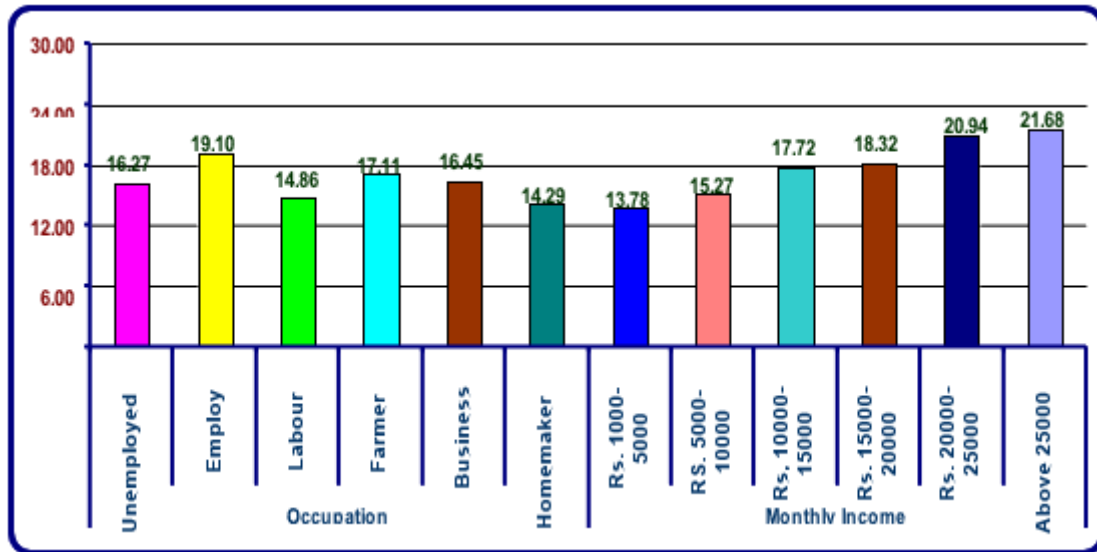


Table 5, observed that the mean perceptual scores of respondents based on their constituency with respect to Factors related Political Participation the mean perceptual scores of Gopalapuram Constituency respondents was 50.44, whereas it is for Kovvuru was 50.30 and it was for Chintalapudi was 56.50 and SD values are 11.57, 12.28 and 11.85 respectively. The ‘F’-value was 21.27 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their constituency and Chintalapudi Constituency respondents perceived high towards Factors related Political Participation than that of the rest.

With respect to Gender, the mean perceptual scores of male category respondents were 56.38, whereas it is for female category respondents was 48.44 and SD values are 10.86 and 12.26 respectively. The ‘t’-value was 9.19 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of male and female category respondents and male category respondents perceived high towards Factors related Political Participation than that of the female category respondents.

With respect to Age, the mean perceptual scores of below 25 years age group respondents was 44.62, whereas it is for 25-30 years age group respondents was 53.25, it was for 30-35 years age group was 54.58, it was for 35-40 years age group was 51.47, it was for 40-45 years age group was 51.72, it was for 45-50 years age group was 49.51, it was for 50-55 years age group was 52.86, it was for 55-60 years age group was 55.60, it was for 60-65 years age group was 51.83, it was for above 65 years age group was 47.75 and SD values are 10.45, 12.19, 10.97, 12.18, 12.17, 13.35, 13.37, 11.65, 12.20 and 10.35 respectively. The ‘F’-value was 2.84 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.05 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their age group and 55-60 years age group respondents perceived high towards Factors related Political Participation than that of the rest.

With respect to Caste, the mean perceptual scores of Mala category respondents were 51.65, whereas it is for Madiga category respondents was 53.17 and SD values are 12.22 and 12.22 respectively. The ‘t’-value was 1.67 and the p-value was 0.10, which was not significant. This shows that, there is no significant difference between the perceptions of Mala and Madiga category respondents and they perceived similar

opinion towards Factors related Political Participation.

With respect to Religion, the mean perceptual scores of Hindu religion category respondents were 56.27, whereas it is for Christian category respondents was 51.45 and SD values are 10.92 and 12.37 respectively. The 't'-value was 4.28 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of Hindu and Christian religion category respondents and Hindu religion category respondents perceived high towards Factors related Political Participation than that of the rest.

With respect to Marital Status, the mean perceptual scores of Unmarried category respondents were 49.41, whereas it is for Married category respondents was 52.73 and SD values are 12.15 and 12.21 respectively. The 't'-value was 2.13 and the p-value was 0.03, which was significant at 0.05 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of Unmarried and Married category respondents and married category respondents perceived high towards Factors related Political Participation than that of the rest.

With respect to Type of family, the mean perceptual scores of Joint family category respondents were 55.82, whereas it is for nuclear category respondents was 48.13 and SD values are 11.46 and 11.84 respectively. The 't'-value was 8.82 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of Joint and Nuclear family category respondents and Joint family category respondents perceived high towards Factors related Political Participation than that of the rest.

With respect to Educational Qualification, the mean perceptual scores of Illiterates was 50.86, whereas it is for Primary education was 52.13, it was for Secondary Education was 51.11, it was for Under Graduates was 52.99, it was for Graduates was 55.43, and it was for Post Graduate was 54.74 and SD values are 12.07, 12.63, 12.31, 13.00, 11.46 and 10.56 respectively. The 'F'-value was 2.66 and the p-value was 0.02, which was significant at 0.05 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their educational qualifications and Graduate qualified category respondents perceived high towards Factors related Political Participation than that of the rest.

With respect to Occupation, the mean perceptual scores of Unemployed was 52.20, whereas it is for Employ was 53.62, it was for Labour was 50.99, it was for Farmer was 60.78, it was for Business was 58.40, and it was for home maker was 48.21 and SD values are 12.61, 11.14, 12.21, 10.82, 10.81 and 11.05 respectively. The 'F'-value was 17.10 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their occupation and Farmer category respondents perceived high towards Factors related Political Participation than that of the rest.

With respect to Monthly Income, the mean perceptual scores of respondents whose monthly income was Rs.1000-5000 was 48.02, whereas it is for Rs. 5000-10000 was 54.02, it was for Rs. 10000-15000 was 57.55, it was for Rs. 15000-20000 was 55.24, it was for Rs. 20000 - 25000 was 56.11, and it was for Above Rs. 25000 was 46.79 and SD values are 11.12, 12.20, 12.37, 11.08, 12.59 and 8.35 respectively. The 'F'-value was 13.26 and the p-value was 0.00, which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that, there is a significant difference among the perceptions of respondents based on their monthly income and Rs. 10000 – 15000 monthly income category respondents perceived high towards Factors related Political Participation than that of the rest.

Figure – : Mean Comparison Among the Perceptions Of Respondents Based On Their Demographic Variables I.E., Constituency, Gender And AgeGroup Towards Factors Related To Political Participation

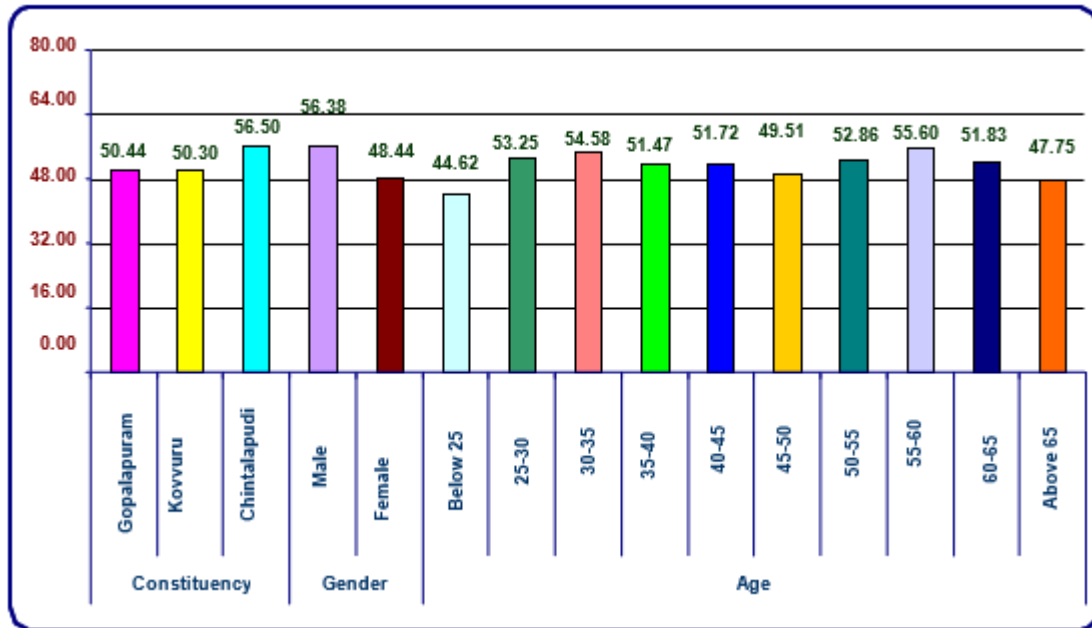


Figure – : Mean Comparison Among the Perceptions Of Respondents Based On Their Demographic Variables I.E., Caste, Religion, Marital Status, Type Of Family And Educational Qualification Towards Factors Related To Political Participation

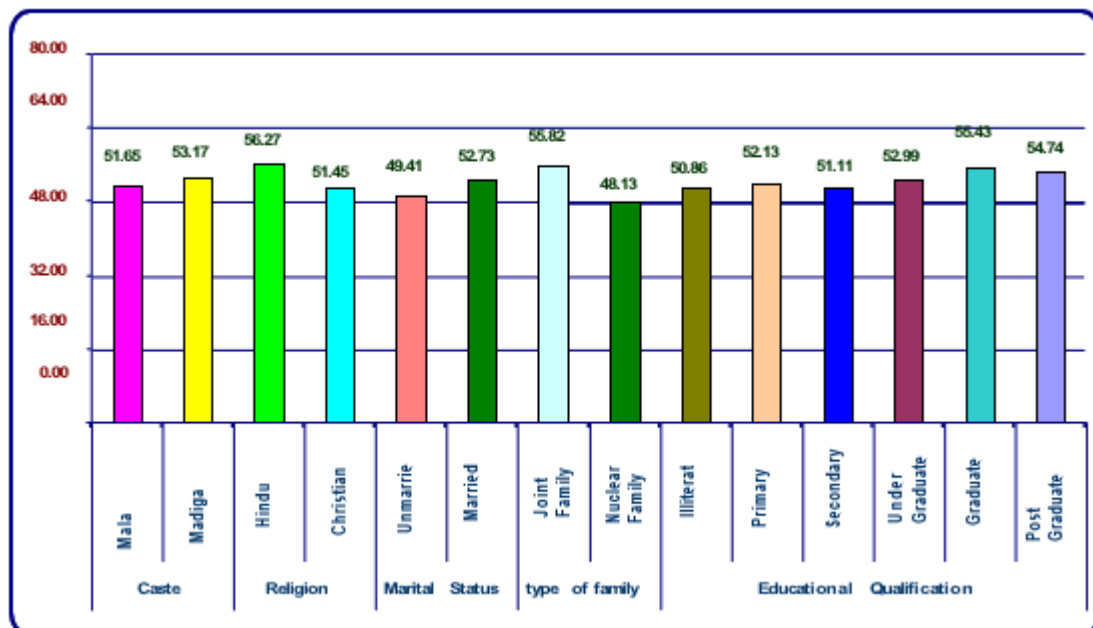
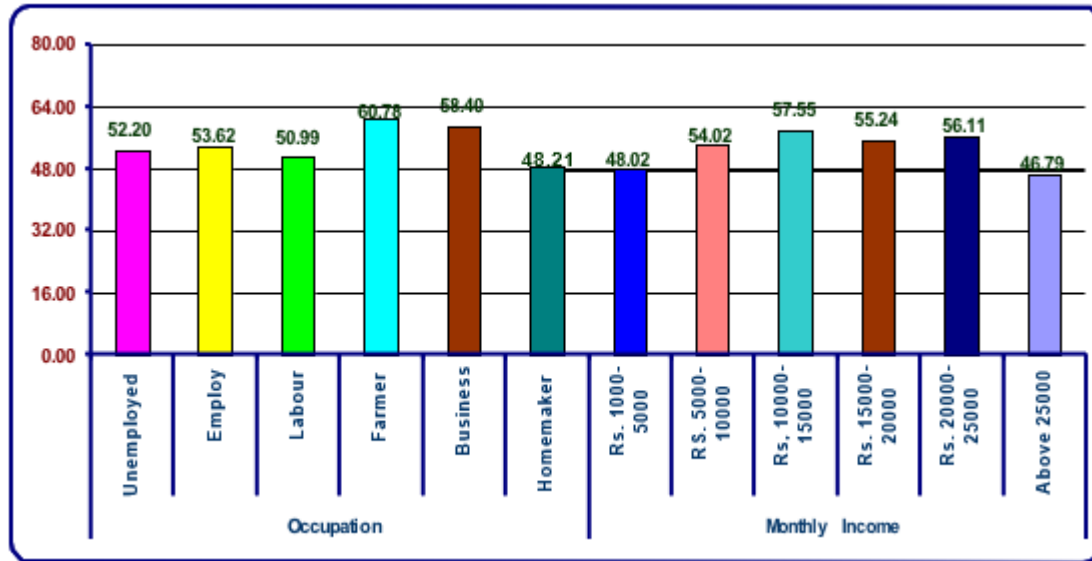


Figure – : Mean Comparison Among the Perceptions Of Respondents Based On Their Demographic Variables I.E., Occupation And Monthly Income Towards Factors Related To Political Participation



Conclusion:

According to Palmer, Norman D., political participation is an essential component of any political system of any kind. Individuals who do not participate in the society are likely to have less authority in comparison to others, regardless of whether the society is a democracy or an oligarchy. One of the most important aspects of a secular democratic government, which is distinguished by the rule of the majority and a system of duty and accountability, is participant participation. For this reason, the degree of participation that citizens of a political entity demonstrate is extremely important to the existence of a democratic political entity. An individual can become an active participant in the activities of the state if they voluntarily participate in those activities. Involvement in politics is a complicated phenomenon that is influenced by a variety of factors that are generated from the sociopolitical context or environment of the system. It was mentioned by J.M. Foskett that the degree of participation differs more between individuals who have the same income but different levels of educational attainment, as opposed to individuals who have different incomes but the same educational attainment (Foskett, J.M.). When it comes to political participation, education remains an important element, and occupational position also has a similar influence on the level of political participation. It is generally observed that those who are in higher socioeconomic positions have a greater tendency to participate in political activities.

This is something that J.M. Foskett has noticed. Without a doubt, education is a crucial aspect that contributes to the explanation of political participation. On the other hand, the scope of its influence might be limited by the influence of other variables. There are a number of other factors that have a more significant impact on political participation, particularly in addition to education and occupation. "A high income, which leads to increased prosperity, more free time, reduced anxiety, and expanded opportunities, naturally motivates people to become more engaged in politics" (Mukhopadyay, A.K). Although income is an important component in the relation of political activity, it is possible that this is not always the case at the national level. Therefore, the level of education, occupation, and income of a person are the factors that determine their position. The likelihood of those with greater social rank participating in political

activities is higher than the likelihood of individuals in lower social strata doing so. Individuals are innately motivated to become more politically engaged when they have higher income, which leads to increased affluence, increased leisure time, decreased fear, and wider options.

Additionally, urban dwellers have a greater understanding of political issues since they have higher levels of education than people who live in rural areas. They also have a greater exposure to mass media, suffer more noticeable divisions based on socioeconomic class and ethnicity, and have a stronger tendency to join voluntary organisations. In addition, they struggle with fewer physical hurdles to engaging in politics. It is as a consequence of this that politics plays a more significant part in their lives in comparison to people who live in rural geographical areas. As a result, the degree of involvement among people living in urban areas is significantly higher than that of people living in rural areas. A political party campaign is a potent instrument that has the capacity to influence a significant number of individuals. Different kinds of campaigns, on the other hand, have different kinds of results. We can classify campaigns as either impersonal or personal, depending on the context. Direct mailings and the distribution of party literature are two examples of the mass media outlets that are utilised almost exclusively in the impersonal campaign. Personal campaigns are run using direct and personal means, in which a party worker or leader participates in face-to-face engagement with individuals. Personal campaigns are commonly used in political campaigns. Recent campaigns of this kind have had an influence on participation that is essentially far more important than previous campaigns. Collectively, education, occupation, and income patterns shape the form of involvement, and as a result, citizen engagement contributes to the enhancement of the efficiency of the political system. The ability to participate in political processes is frequently associated with innate characteristics such as self-assurance and social responsibility. Similarly, religious beliefs and racial identity can sometimes have a discernible impact on political participation.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher has decided to focus on a certain theoretical framework, which is identified as political awareness among Christians. The purpose of this framework is not to serve as a substitute for any other theoretical ideas. The fact that this theoretical perspective, like any other perspective, is not fully perfect is something that should be brought to your attention. Having said that, the researcher came to the realization that this particular viewpoint is more advantageous in a particular context, and as a result, they decided to accept this theoretical framework despite the limitations it possesses.

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